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TAGS: [PREL](#) [UNSC](#) [UNGA](#) [ECON](#) [EFIN](#) [EG](#)
SUBJECT: EGYPT PROPOSES STRENGTHENED TIES BETWEEN UN
SECURITY COUNCIL AND AFRICAN UNION

Sensitive but unclassified. Please protect accordingly.

¶1. (SBU) MFA Assistant Minister for African Affairs, Ambassador Massoum Marzouk, convoked the Charge on December 19 to describe Egypt's proposal to strengthen institutional linkages between the African Union's Peace and Security Council (PSC) and the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). The Egyptians, he said, recently distributed a concept paper to UN Security Council members in New York, and are awaiting feedback. Other members of the AU PSC and UN Secretary General Annan endorsed the proposal during a November 16 PSC meeting in Addis Ababa. Egypt, which joined the PSC last March, is pursuing the initiative while it serves as PSC President for the month of December.

¶2. (SBU) Marzouk emphasized that the proposal would in no way seek to displace or undermine the role and responsibility of the UN Security Council for conflict resolution. But, existing mechanisms for collaboration and coordination, he said, could be strengthened without any additional bureaucracy. In accordance with Rule 37 of the UNSC's provisional rules of procedure, he said, the AU PSC President could be included in formal and informal UNSC sessions (without voting rights) when African issues are under discussion. Similarly, the UNSC President could be invited to attend AU PSC meetings (without voting rights) when issues of mutual concern were debated. Marzouk stressed no expenditures would be involved. The AU PSC representative in New York would attend UNSC meetings; the UNSC Chair's representative in Addis would attend PSC meetings. Similar coordination is envisioned between the UN Secretariat and the AU Commission, as well as between the PSC and the UN Peace Building Commission. With "60 percent of all UN peace keeping operations in Africa," he said, it makes sense to improve coordination between the UN and AU PSC (established in 2004).

¶3. (SBU) Comment: Better communication and coordination between the UN Security Council and the African Union's Peace and Security Council is a worthwhile endeavor, especially in the wake of the Darfur conflict. Egypt's effort to validate the Chapter VIII (UN Charter) approach to African conflict resolution may be somewhat motivated by a desire to benefit financially from UNSC subcontracting to the AU PSC. Egypt has asked us for financial assistance for its plan to build a peace-keeping training institute for African troops. It is currently a member of the UN Peace Building Commission, and plays strongly within the AU. We expect the MFA to raise this subject during our bilateral Africa talks, should we agree to February dates in Cairo. A copy of the 4-page Egyptian paper has been e-mailed to NEA/ELA.

